

HEART OF THE HILLS
(*Poems*)

—
ALBERT DURRANT WATSON

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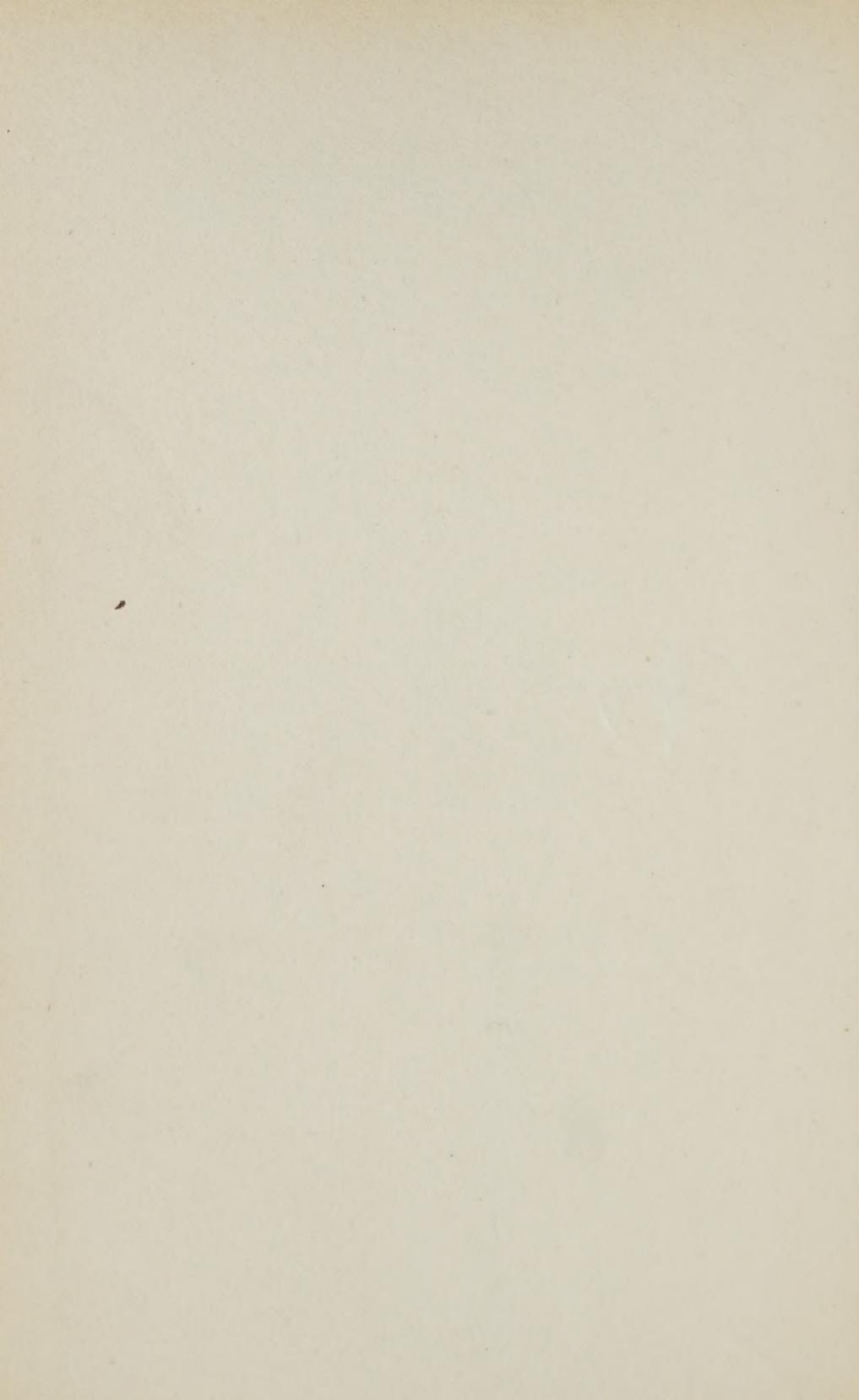
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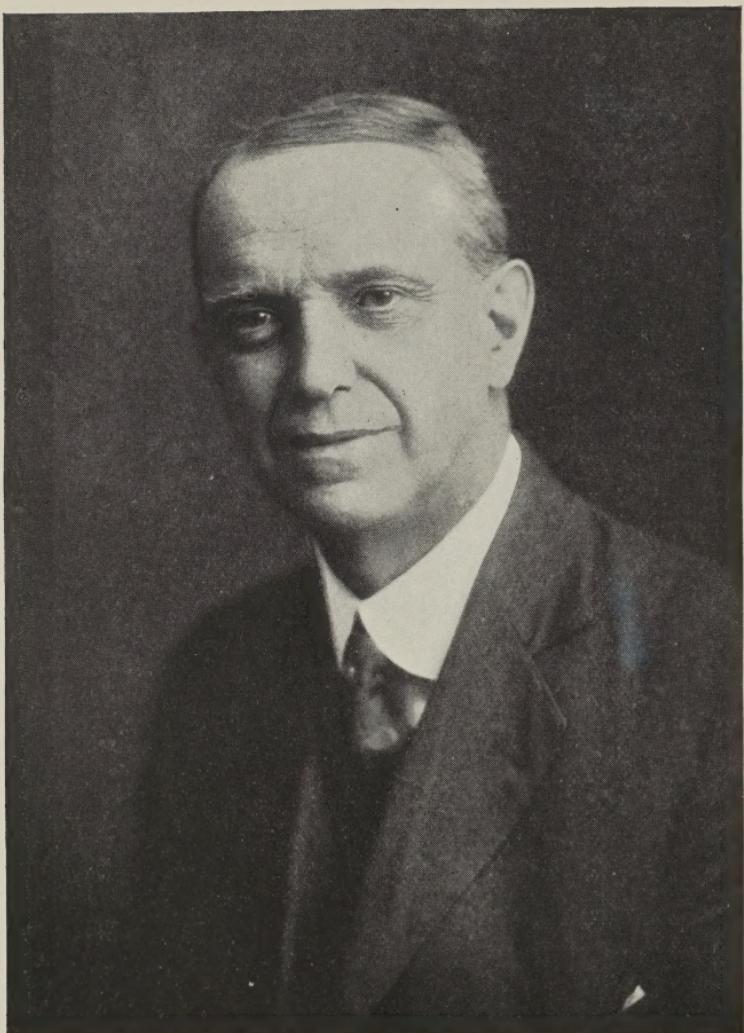
HEART OF THE HILLS

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ALBERT DURRANT WATSON

Heart of the Hills

(Poems)

By

Albert Durrant Watson

Author of '*The Sovereignty of Ideals*,' '*The Sovereignty of Character*,' '*The Wing of the Wild Bird*,' '*Love and the Universe*,' etc.



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Harper divine, with Love's elusive fingers,
Touch the chords of this soft-breathing lyre
Till, vocal as the forest, choral as the sea,
They voice the everlasting song,
Fill all the air with ecstasy of wings,
And turn the harp to music.

THE SOUL OF THE RAINBOW

THE sunbeams painted a rainbow
On the mist floating over a valley,
And a child and a sage looked upon it.

Then the mist found language, thus speaking:
"Lo, all eyes shall behold now my beauty."

The child saw the beautiful bow,
The sage, the broken-rayed light,
But the soul that was throbbing within it,
The fount of its loveliness, waited unseen,
And longing, and lonely

Then the clouds hid the sun-rays from vision,
And tears of rain fell. Love was weeping.

TWENTY

JUST twenty years to-day!
But are you not that flower
That in the lotus valley grew
Where only Theban maidens knew
The heaven-secluded bower?

Just twenty years to-day?
And yet I seem to hear
In gilded courts of Babylon,
In Heliopolis and On,
A thousand voices clear

Acclaim your cavalcade
That down the Tigris veers;
With young Semiramis beside,
You stately dromedaries ride
Down avenues of years.

Palmyra's jewelled light
Shone o'er your desert roads;
Atlantis in her coral arms,
Held you, a child of many charms,
In her wave-swept abodes.

Dear dream-child of the past,
Joy of the years that lay
Their sleeping forms beneath the strife,
Deep-buried in the crypts of life,
Your twenty years to-day

Are myriads of years;
Your lovelier life to mould,
The ages have their largess brought
Of glorious deed and lofty thought—
Ah, you are very old;

And you will pour the urge
Of all that earlier strife
With its incalculable cost,
Its victories won, its battles lost,
Into the stream of life.

ART AND LIFE

ART is a world of beauty
Serene as a summer night,
Where Love is the lord of duty,
And faith is the only light.

Life is a weaver, to fashion
Dreams from a golden skein
With instruments of passion
And ministries of pain.

I LOVE YOU

I LOVE you as the angels love, Dear Heart;
I love you far beyond the dreams of art.
As radiant stars fling out their silver light
Across the silent spaces of the night,
No word they speak, and yet the stars are true
To one transcendent chord—so, I love you.

I love you as the blossom loves the day,
As tender leaves thrill to the breath of May,
As suns at twilight seek the rose-hued west,
I love you as the weary soul loves rest.
Till you my day with sunshine presence bless,
I am but longing, love and loneliness.

DREAM VALLEY

I KNOW a vale where the oriole swings
Her nest to the breeze and the sky,
The iris opens her petal wings
And a brooklet ripples by;
In the far blue is a cloud-drift,
And the witch-tree dresses,
With a rare charm in the warm light,
Her long dream-tresses.

But yestermorn—or was it a dream?
When daisies were drinking the dew,
I wandered down by the little stream,
And who was there but you?
Though Nature smiled with the old joy
To the boldest comer,
It was your voice and the wildbird's
Were the soul of summer.

When bowed with the toils of many years,
I would rest, if it be Love's will,
In a vale where the bird-songs to my ears
Come floating across the hill,
With the sweet breath of the June air
And the purple clover,
And the lone dream of the old love,
And the blue skies over.

THE AUREOLE

I

WHEN from the bow-string of the night
The arrows of the starlight fall,
The memories of dream-music come
With beauty, almost pain.
Their reminiscent tones and cadences
Haunted with happiness,
Blend with the restful silences
Like distant bell-chimes
In the sunset hour.

I saw the red sun painting skyey symphonies
In banners o'er the hills;
Heard slumber-songs,
You swaying, swinging,
Crooningly, tenderly;
Saw deserts and oases,
Hills of green and forests dim,
Far stretching down the years
While the deep consciousness
Of mother-love was surging,
Singing in my soul.

How well I still remember
The zig-zag butterflies
I gleefully pursued;

The birds I chased away,
Climbing the tree myself
To make the cherries mine;
The white, and purple trilliums
Gathered in the woods
And proudly brought to you!

Last night I had a token in a dream:
You came and laid my tired head
Tenderly on your heart.
I rested peaceful there
Dream-folded in your arms,
Babe-wise upon your bosom
Cradled in rhythmic slumber.
The distant past
Came back again, and lo,
You were my mother,
I your baby boy!

• • •
Mother of ages, mother of me,
Your voice is the soul of rest—
The trumpet winds and the organ sea:
The billow your heaving breast.

Throned in that cradle of love and dream,
Your arms so soft and warm,
I laugh in the face of the lightning's gleam,
I am glad of the sting of the storm.

II

The lotus of forgetfulness
Itself forgotten, life unfolded new,
And like a golden sunrise,
Mounted to flaming peaks.

That was our time, great comrade,
Though forgotten ages and lives ago.
Love deepened till a sacred fire
Burned on life's altar stone,
Consuming every shred of selfishness,
Yet love and life were not consumed.

To my love-luminous vision,
You were clothed with splendour
Of the southern stars. In you,
My heart discovered that fine alchemy
That turns all things to joy.
For you were beautiful!
An emerald of the forest and the meadow.
The blue sky mirrored you;
The very thought of you, my bride,
Ambrosial nurture was;
Lo, a young god was I!

But things of time and sense
Can never image love.
Like sunlight, subtle and electric,
We moved in waves of power,
All-conquering as the sea.
Joy rose on equal wing until
We soared through far abysms of light.
Then energy and beauty
Like suns from some new heaven
Rode stormfully into our hearts
In sacrament of love,
Swung wide the gates of being,
Till body, mind and spirit
Surrendered to the strong creative urge
That gave us fruitage of the sky,
The earth, the sea,
And all the spirit harmonies.

But Love for sake of loving,
Life for sake of life,
Reined in that glad, fierce power,
Lest in our self-abandon,
We should both be swept
Far from our mooring-place
And plunged to the abyss.
So followed we the dear love-angel
Guarding, guiding up that road
That leads to fields of life
With no time-boundaries.

One day—O mighty sorrow!
Measureless the deep!
Great must Love's purpose be!
You lay there pale and pulseless
In the moonlight—dead!
Haloed your sunny hair,
Love-aureoled, ineffable!
I seemed forsaken in a voiceless world,
But soon your spirit-presence came,
A sweetness robed in gladness.

• • • •
Yet not alone! I hear no feet
On the oaken floor of the hallway beat,
 Yet the spacious rooms of my heart are bright
 With the glow of love in eyes of light,
That fills me with strength and joy complete.

I sit alone on the rustic seat
Where the lovers' path and the waters meet;
 By outward presence forsaken quite,
 Yet not alone.

Ah, never alone! In each dear retreat,
An unforgotten form I greet;
 The desert place is a sacred height,
 Companionless am I to-night,
 Yet not alone.

III

We lived among the mountains,
And below the peaks
Were jack-pines and the flood.
You were my only daughter,
Reft of mother care
Even from your babyhood;
But since you were
In her fair image formed,
Her dear love-presence
Was restored in you.

To you I was as mother,
Filled your lamp of life
With fragrant oil.
You shone resplendent.
Even now I see you standing,
Joy in eyes, like sunlight on the sea,
Or eve-glow on the hills
At vesper-hour.

I was the craggy mountain,
You the laurel tree
That nestled in its heart.
Defence was I and shelter,
You the pride and treasure of my years.
The sun beat on my bosom warming you,
And when the fury of the blast drove icily,

Loud-shrieking o'er my crags and spars
Like ghosts of crime-stained men,
You, in my coverts standing, sheltered warm,
Smiled as the blue heavens smile.

Often with open arms and radiant eyes,
You came to meet me,
Sunlight gleaming in your hair
That tossed upon my shoulder.
You were all my happiness,
A joy too sweet for words,
Too deep for tears.
You found new heart-ways to my soul,
New highroads for great love.

I was your father and your mother;
Loved you and was loved for both.
We waded in the streamlet,
Wandered in the wild;
We climbed the hills
When evening rouged the west,
And saw the haze to gloaming fade.
We watched the restless night-bird
Circling down the sky
And revelling in the dark.
We played at hide and seek
With every peeping star
That laughed and twinkled,
And the silence sacred was
To you, daughter of long ago.

I taught you wisdom—heart-lore,
All 'twas well to know
Of what the world knew well;
But chiefly taught you
Wisdom of the heart
That made your living pure and true
And fitted your young soul
For guesting angels.

In promise, you were then
A prophecy of now,
The child of my great hope.
When storms broke me with blight,
You were my restoration;
Again was I the mountain,
Storm-swept still, but crowned
With everlasting light.
The sacred fire of your dawning
Fell in floods upon my heart,
Uplifting me to hope and joy and strength.

Thus through the years,
With love and light
Companion of our ways,
We strolled together in the wild.
Before the sun, high-rising,
Bade the dew-drops hide
Behind their veils of light.
We found the simple flowers,

Woodbine, anemone, arbutus,
Breathing morning fragrance
While the brush of wizard dawn
Painted with beauty
All the eastern skies.
When nature sang her morning-song
We two went forth with God.

Morn hid the tranquil stars
In caverns of day;
Warmly, the sunny bars
On the alders lay;
Lightly each grassy spathe
Held its sphere of dew
Out of the dust and scathe
To the fleckless blue.
Safe from the curious eye,
From ravage or raid,
Neath a sapphire sky,
In a wildwood glade,
The flowers blossomed for God,
Unseen, yet fragrant and fair;
Love could not pluck
From their thrones of green
The buds of His care.

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IV

We slept again as dew-drops sleep
When kist into the sun;
As drowsy music melts
Into the chorus of the silences.
What lives we lived meanwhile
Is not my tale.
In Love's large plan
Is nothing else but life.
Enough that each had felt
The urge of immortality,
And stormed the gates of birth
For full expression of his latest dream.

How many years were we apart!
Long yearning years
That called to deed anew,
The world of truth like bending skies
O'erarching all our days.
And each was thrilled
With promise of an hour
When Love should bring together
With a sunrise pageantry
Two eager, waiting hearts
Who knew each other one.

Then came the day! We met!
The joy of starry cycles,
Pent in time's great ocean,
Burst its ancient shores,
And down the sluices of that dawn
Poured floods of chivalry and song.
The light of day,
The vastness of the night,
The wisdom of the ages,
All achievements of the mind,
Were nothing to that blazing splendour.

In tragic undiscernment
All the multitude
Said we were merely friends.
Mere friends! O blind of heart!
The out-flung systems of the sky,
In travail bowed,
Creation groaned for ages,
Suns emerged from chaos,
Stars were burned,
That your great soul and mine—
There are no little souls—
Should be just friends.

Every noble avenue of earth
Is but a pathway bright with prophecy
And promise of that shining goal.
The harmonies of life,

The songs that shall endure,
And all the Art that thrills
With majesty and mystery
Would pass forever,
Fold themselves in vesture of decay
Were Friendship dead.

The joy of motherhood
Is but one stone
In friendship's noble fane.
To be united as a man with woman
Is but to turn the steps,
The eyes, the heart, the life,
Into a vaster union.
The nearest, dearest obligations of the soul,
The circle of all lofty ties
And worthy recognitions
But aureole a mightier Love—
Love that is love,
Unparalleled by urge
Of contract or of sense—
A consciousness that he or she
Is of my blood, that is, myself;
Therefore I love him or love her.

Ay, we were friends;
And with that fact accomplishèd,
The stars laughed in their heavens,
The birds and streams

Rippled the air with liquid music,
And the flowers and forests
Gowned themselves with fragrant loveliness.
The heroes of the world
Were playmates of our past.
Greater than David, Herakles, St. George,
Who trampled dragons underfoot
And lions slew,
We had slain jealousy, intolerance,
And all the monster tyrannies;
Had subjugated circumstance,
Transfigured fate,
Annihilated destiny.

We learned to love the common good,
To live serene, strive upwards,
In high communion with dream-voices,
Yet were we self-restrained
And reverent of law.
Wide fame we scorned,
Since self-respect is better
Than the far repute
Of undiscerning and misjudging men.
Our higher Self had conquered self;
We loved, were loved,
And life was victory.

’Twas thus, heroic heart, you came,
And with you, as in dream,

The flowers we would not pluck,
But left upon their thrones of loveliness,
Deep in their wildernesses long ago,
To smile on heaven
And blush to crimson
Neath the kiss of God.

O Friend of Friends, I think of you,
And all the air is fragrant once again
With breath of violets,
And plaintive with the murmur of the sea,
And rich beyond the power of words
Or grasp of thought
With music of your voice.

But, being thus your friend,
Am I the less your son,
Your husband, or your sire
In angel meaning,
Than when, long ago,
Enfolded in your dear, white arms,
I felt the dark grow lighter with your song?
Or when our home was Paradise,
And life was ecstasy
Because you were my queen?
Or when with you
I wandered in the wild,
And clasped you laughing,
In my arms, a lover-child?

I hear your voice—
The angels seem to sing
And breathe wild fragrances around!
Deep in your eyes,
The blue skies sleep,
The mountains rest,
And all the wide seas roll;
But Love Eternal never sleeps.
How could Love sleep,
Thou in His Universe?

V

Yon dome of watery gray
That crowds us in
Is cleft with sudden flame,
And through the fiery rift
I see the larger day,
The blue beyond the mist,
The free and vast solemnities of sky.

Again the arch is split with fire—
A moment's silence—now,
With hammers of the hurricane,
The storm-king beats the mountains,
Crash on crash!
The thunders roar along the hills
And wind-flails thresh the sea.
The tumult rolls afar and dies

To distant ripples, crackling
Like musketry;
With engines of the tempest,
Thor is smoothing out
The crumpled parchment of the hills
To level plains.

How, like a mad witch,
The goddess of the storm
Her skirts of rain trails down the night!
Tosses dishevelled hair
Over the shoulders of the world
Till all the gray horizon mirrors
Her dark, impassioned beauty!

The trees take firmer root
To brace themselves
Against the rebel winds
That riot o'er the lands.
Before the flood
The sand foundations glide away
And leave bed-rock
On which faith builds new eras.

War-floods sweep the world;
Men stare across the lands,
Tremble, and think of God.
Tempests rise out of dreams,

New ages dawn, and in the end,
The better dream prevails.

Our lives are one
With that Great Heart
That thunders in the height.
We share the storm with Him.
Our souls are tranquil, therefore,
Though the world be swept with fire.
The blast that breaks
The fortress of the flesh
Shall lift us on its breath
To higher vision, wider vistas,
Holier dreams.

The silken veils
Are torn from Psyche's pinions;
A new life floats
Into the light,
The heart leaps to great hope
And splendid purpose
Dawns from new dreams.

Friend of the steadfast heart,
When day is done
And night falls westward
After all these stern restraints of will,
In that glad hour

When kind, mysterious Death
Rides down the wind
And hurricanes of flame
Unloose our wings
To the great life beyond,
Then crush me to your heart
And I will fold you
As a flower to mine
Before the face of God.
And we shall mount
In chariot of the blast
To heights of ecstasy and power,
The stern, dark beauty of the sky
Unveiled to open view
In one tremendous storm-betrothal
To Love's immortal youth.

And I shall see your face,
Your starry eyes
And glinting hair;
Shall hear your voice
As in the former days
In old Virginian wilds.
In that new love-land of our dream,
Where violet-odours
With the wild thrush-music blend
Beside the singing streams,
I'll lay Love's aureole upon your brow
And love you as I love you now.

NOT IN PALACES

O NOT in palaces of pride
Are love and faith most surely found;
Where peace and lowliness abide
Is oftentimes holier ground.

I deem the honest heart of him
Who turns the brown soil to the sun
And keeps a cottage neat and trim
By far the happier one.

With him is e'er the noblest art,
A faithfulness no might can bend;
His surest peace, a lowly heart,
His truest wealth, a friend.

THE DREAM-TRAMP

ONCE on a day, in the dawning of days,
Where the wonder-beauties of nature team
And urge to the starry gates of dream,
Far from the city's noisy ways,
Far from its blur of smoke and haze,
Where fields slant up to the great sun's gleam
And down to the edge of the laughing stream,
We stood entranced by the wildbird's praise.

And oft in my dreams in the tranquil night,
I listen again while the greybirds sing
As I tramp through glades where the echoes ring
Of the morning lashing her steeds of light;
And silvery reefs float lightly above
The hills of dream and the glens of love.

WHERE LOVE KNOWS LOVE

LIKE phantom ships
That haunt the dim horizon with white shrouds,
We come, emergent from the mistral gloom,
Love's angels pilgrim a world of dream.

Ah, there's a spirit-music in the air,
Ethereal as the moaning wind-harp's song
Or night's auroral fingers, felt and heard
Until, with lull of alien victories,
Our child-hearts sleep, and we are deaf to dreams.

But God hath yet a few with joy-wist eyes
And wonder-questing hearts would dare the sea
With undiscovered shores, whose eager gaze
Is towards the Isles of Truth, where visions new
Invite the soul to larger, nobler life,
And challenge to a faith whose beacon fires
Have not yet embered to the ash of creed
That palsies reason, candour lulls to sleep.

O Comrades, live your vision, cherish dream,
And trim your lamps to light the awakening world.
If need be, wreck the towers of yesterday,
Scrap the dead past and build the future new,

So recreate the age; move steadfastly
To promised lands more green than Canaan's hills,
And usher in the hero days of now,
Fill the whole earth with justice, and transform
The arid desert of the world's desire
To gardens where heartsease and speedwell grow.
Pluck roses from the blushing cheek of dawn
While yet the paling stars of morning sing.

'Twere done alone by renaissance of man
When Self divine has doomed exclusive self
To deepest hell, and life regenerate looks,
With loins girded, down the waiting years.
Ah, Love will never let the chords of life
Fall slack and mute the harp. He holds more taut
The vibrant string—so life is keyed to tones
Of great achievement,—killing greed and waste
With prudent vision and a larger plan.
Then Luxury—decay in masquerade—
Slinks out into the night and dies alone.

I see the sun-glow in a firmament
Resplendent with the open smile of God.
The green bud bursts to instantaneous flower
And nature blushes crimson, Love has come
To bridge the gulf between us and that world
Of comradeship where love knows Love,
And life is sane and sovereign.

There the dream comes true.
There men are noble, being sons of God,
To look on beauty with a seraph-eye,
And set the mother-heart of woman free,
That her madonna-consciousness may claim
For all her children unbegotten yet,
A nobler fatherhood, till Love and dream
Sing in her heart their joy-magnificat,
And give new birth to great and very God,
Born of a woman and the Holy Ghost,
And yet the son of man,—his saviour too.

O glorious vision of a perfect time!
One stroke of Love's great clock shall put to shame
A thousand years of present happiness.
There is no wealth but Love!

LOVE AND LIFE

I HOLD you in my arms so fast
That while the great world rushes past
Your soul and mine shall be the sun
And all things else shall round us run;
We both shall rise in joy-embrace
Heads bent aback and face to face;
My eyes shall drink of Love's own cup
And yours life's sacrament shall sup
Till, raptured with the joy of God,
We rise to mountain-peaks untrod
And soar into the blue abyss
Love-lifted to immortal bliss;
You then shall be my perfect light
And I your music of the night,
My wings of inspiration—you,
And I your songbird in the blue.

THE SACRED HOUR

THIS is the hour when falls the fadeless light,
And hearts turn homeward, weariness oppressed,
To healing springs of sacramental night,
To lofty sources of inspiring rest.

This is the hour when earth-lights disappear,
And starry openings through the night's dim walls
Let angel whispers steal upon my ear
While on my heart Love's perfect music falls.

This is the hour. Lo, all the space around
Is stilled to peace, and down the subtle air
No breezes stir, no step nor word nor sound,
But deep-souled eloquence is breathing there.

Now care and grief and loneliness depart,
Here life bursts forth to new, entrancing song,
The wistful silences with wonder start,
Confessing, though unseen, the angel throng.

The sacred hour, or past or yet to be,
Is when Love's presence to my soul is known;
Then all the universe is home to me,
And Love speaks low, and I am not alone.

THE LIGHT OF YOUR DEAR FACE

THIS is only a gleam of a by-gone day,
But a gleam that no gold could buy,
A starry vision of long ago,
A dream where I see you lie
With your brown hair on your bosom
In tresses of exquisite grace,
And above you the mystic halo
Of moonlight o'er your face.

I tramp down the ways where we used to go
When the summer was warm and sweet
With breath of clover and violets,
And think of your dream-shod feet
On the green banks of the Humber,
Or up on the Bathurst hill
That pushes its lofty summit
To the stars so holy and still.

I stand again on the moonlit shore,
And the splash of the waters blue
Brings back once more the golden days,
The sacred hours with you;
On the sand-dunes of the east shore
Where pine-plumes are whispering low,
'Tis the music of your voice I hear
When the winds their organs blow.

The vision wakes in the still hours
When the darkness has veiled my sight;
The curtain thins and your face I see
In waves of the dreamy light.
'Tis a rare dream and a golden,
And ages can never erase
The memory sweet and olden
Of the light on your dear face.

BELLS OF BEING

BEHIND the curtains of form
The bells of being ring,
And beyond the heart of the real
There is not anything;
But Love is the music of being
And Love is the soul of Art,
And to live is simply to hear
The whisper-beat of His heart.

MEMORIES

WHEN Joy in Love's dear eyes
Kisses our own with smiles,
Comes music of sweet bells
That ringing far away,
Laugh heavens into the heart;
But when they cease,
The spacious halls of memory
Are thrilled with echoes of a love
Too strong for speech,
The dim harmonious silences
Blush with a crimson light,
Faith becomes strangely young,
Wisdom matures, and Love
Finds immortality.

YOU

THE work of day over,
The dew on the clover,
Stars peep one by one from the blue;
My heart widely roaming,
I sit in the gloaming,
And dream, how I dream, Love, of you!

But no words can measure
The worth of the treasure
That memory calls into view;
And never are wanting
The scenes that are haunting
My heart with the memory of you.

The moon ripples brightly
O'er waters that nightly
Reflect heaven with image so true;
But I find when you meet me,
Wherever you greet me,
A lovelier heaven in you.

And always my sadness
Is turned into gladness,
And life thrills with glory anew,
Whenever I ponder
The beauty, the wonder,
The love and the glory of you.

Discouraged and weary,
Life lonely and dreary,
Friends absent, hope failing me too;
All blessing departed,
I still am strong-hearted
With one friend if that friend be you.

THE HOUSE OF DREAM

YOU may dwell in a mansion towered and tall
Or camp in a beggar's tents,
But desert or palace, your sure defence
Is a love that builds no wall.

Oh a beggar is he, whatever he seem,
Who lives in a house of things,
But he is as rich as the Lydian kings
Whose home is a house of dream.

DREAM-FISHING

INTO the silent stream
Of consciousness I flung
Deep nets of sleep, and caught the dream
That Love is always young.

51

THE MYRTLE

DEAR little flower of the myrtle,
Loveliness dew-impearled;
Beauty I find, but nowhere combined
So sweetly with rest, or so wholly refined;
Emblem thou art
Of the lowly heart
And of Love, the joy of the world.

DANDELIONS

THE golden dandelion stars
Are surely loved of God the most
Of all the blossoms, since He made
Them an innumerable host.

The sward is tinted with the light,
Its silken star-web newly spun;
The dew-drop on the leaf distilled
Is an elixir of the sun.

From many an oriel of the sky
Angels must look with raptured face
Upon those lovely, lowly flowers
That we have scorned as commonplace.

They fade before their youth is past;
Their silver heads rise like a prayer,
Not for a truer angel love,
But for a tenderer human care.

In simple things a beauty lies
That lustres all our onward way,
And Love speaks clear and constantly
In language of the common day.

THE SPARROW

A LITTLE meal of frozen cake,
A little drink of snow,
And when the sun is setting,
A broad-eaved bungalow.

A little hopping in the sun
Throughout the wintry day,
A little chirping blithely
Till March drifts into May:

A little sparrow's simple life,
And Love, that life to keep,
That careth for the sparrow
Even when it falls asleep.

THE ORIOLE

THOU, Oriole, bright summer bringest.
Out-flung like a spark from the ringing
Red forge of the sun, or a rocket
That soars star-illumined, thou springest
Back homeward to run to that pocket
That hides thy young joy-brood a-swinging
Like faces love-hid in a locket.

Through sunbeams thou beatest a highway,—
Wing-lifted and bosom auroral—
Thou givest brief life to the hours,
As over the blue, zephyred sky-way,
Through atmospheres fragrant with flowers,
Thy warblings in sunniest choral
Emparadise woodlands and bowers.

THE HERMIT THRUSH

HARK! The rich tones of a wondrous tune
 Come up from the brakes,
Stirring the coverts of Canada's June
 And gladdening the Lakes:
Tones of a passionate, joy-laden heart
 Whose fervid desire
Springs from the infinite fountain of Art,
 Intense as a fire;
How each exultant, wild, ecstasy-note,
 In melodious rush,
Bursts from the song-mad, silvery throat
 Of the hermit Thrush!

Sweetest of songsters, queen evermore
 Of the joy-breathing throng,
Opening to heaven, unwearied, the door
 Of tumultuous song;
Filling the silences far from the ways
 Of self-seeking men;
With billowy outbursts of turbulent praise
 From stream and from glen;
Thine is no heart-rending sorrow that sobs
 In tear-freighted lay;
Thine is a music that vibrates and throbs
 With the gladness of day.

When thou dost sing, O jubilant bird,
Thy music intense
Seemeth far sweeter than heaven hath heard,
To spirit and sense.
What is the wondrous source of that dream
That mellows thy voice?
Where is the sun and soul of the gleam
That bids thee rejoice,
Making thy song like an iris of fire,
By some angel hand
Flung from a rainbow,—an exquisite lyre
From the music-land?

JULY

A WHITE cloud-sail in a sea of blue
Mid the splendours of the day,
A meadow drenched with the diamond dew
And the air with new-mown hay;
A lazy brook through a green vale flowing
And never a breeze astir,
A sun-kist flower by the wayside blowing,
A swallow's wing awhir,—
This is July of the bountiful heat,
Month of wild roses, and berries, and wheat.

OCTOBER

THE year swings onward. Now the faerie sods
Glisten with frosty dew, and on the path
Dead leaves are fallen. In mirth of mimic wrath
The hawthorn shakes his spears. The four wind-gods
Blow lustily, and from the milk-weed pods
Seed-arrows scatter in an aftermath
Of feathered wings that drift into a bath
Of sunlight o'er the withered golden-rods.

October, many wholesome pleasures fill
Thy tranquil hours—south-going wings awhir,
The golden pumpkins dotted o'er the hill,
The moist, brown chestnut, bursting from its burr,
Those ingle hours that only autumn knows,
And apple incense richer than the rose.

CHRISTMAS

GIVE each new day its own good cheer
All other days apart,
And every day throughout the year
Keep Christmas in your heart.

IN THE HEART OF THE HILLS

The Toboggan

THIS is the queen of the hills!
All Canada thrills
At the thought of a speed
That is almost flight
O'er the elfin mead
In the pale moonlight,
As she curves away like a shooting star
Down, down to the snowy fields afar
Through the heart of the mighty hills.

Shouts on the merry hillside!
Ah, here is a tide
Of the veriest glee
That ever was heard;
The surge of the sea
Or the song of a bird
Is tame in the wake of those wilder joys
That spring from the throats of girls and boys
On the vivid toboggan slide.

There, like an arrowy gleam,
The soul of a dream,
She stands at the word
Of the captain's will
Like a tempest bird
On her topmost hill;
All hearts are eager, all eyes alight,
Faces are rosy and spirits bright,
In the glance of the moon's pale gleam.

Pause they a moment—a hush,
Now, steersman, a push!
And she starts for the plain
With one foot to guide,
As a chip that has lain
On the stream might ride
When over Niagara's brow it curved
And plunged to the rapids below, unswerved
From the line of its downward rush.

Sudden, the air that was still
Is a gale on the hill!
All the stars, the wide sky,
And the fields besides,
In their mad sweep by
Are as moving tides;
Even thought is too slow to keep the pace
And lags in the swift toboggan race
Down the long Canadian hill.

On sails the skiff of the snow!
The maples below
Are uprising in air
While the snow they crush
As they onward bear
In their downward rush.
A mile a minute! Oh, that were to crawl;
They never could win in the race at all
Could they not more speedily go.

Slackens the speed of the bird
Not enough for a word
Or a thought of all this—
The flight or the fall—
Unless one would miss
The feel of it all,
The sense of the boundless strength of the hills,
The answering shout of the heart that thrills
When the winter's trumpet is heard.

Over hill-terraces vast,
Our caravel fast—
Like the redman's canoe
On St. Laurent's tide,
When it runs the Long Sault—
Doth buoyantly glide;
Careering apace to the valleys of snow,
The wide-spreading everglades farther below,
The everglades, eerie and vast.

Out on the valley, indeed,
Somewhat lessens her speed;
Yet she skims o'er the ice
Of the open pond,
And glides in a trice
To the fields beyond;
Goes drifting out where the shadows play
With the moonbeams white, and far away
Till, weary, she rests in the mead.

Up to the snow-peak afar
Is a path to the star,
For lo! o'er the hill
Is Jupiter bright,
Majestic and still,
The prince of the night;
And the long upward path to the hilltop's verge
Is taken with courage that needs no urge—
The long rising road to the star.

Oh what a picturesque folk!
Moccasin, jersey and toque;
And they love to climb
Since climbing is Art,
For life is a hill
Both to mind and heart,
And jewels of night gem the heavens so clear,
While they climb the height in many-hued gear
Of moccasin, jersey and toque.

Then hail to the queen of the hills!
The heart wildly thrills
At the thought of a speed
That is almost flight,
O'er the elfin mead,
In the pale moonlight,
And greater the music of life by far
When we climb the sacred road to the star
In Love's mighty heart of the hills.

MAN

HERO of unknown story,
He sweeps through the gates of birth;
Heir of an untold glory,
He bids farewell to the earth;
An irised vapour of thought,
A rainbow mirrored in dew,
A cloud in a sunbeam caught
Adrift in the blue.

THE SACRAMENT

THE world was builded out of flame and storm.
The oak, blast-beaten on the hills, stands forth
Stalwart and strong. The ore is broken, crushed
And sifted in the flaming crucible;
The remnant is pure gold. Brave hearts must dare
The billowy surge beneath the stern white stars
To net the finny harvests of the sea:
No boon is won, but some new hero dies.

There is in every gift a sacrament,
And every service is a holy thing,—
Not unto him whose easy pence unearned
The treasure buys, but to the one who takes
The gift with reverence from that unknown
Who went forth brave and strong, came, broken, back,
But won for us a rare and priceless pearl.

TO WORLDS MORE WIDE

“’Tis like a birth to worlds more wide.”—L. Bacon.

THE rapier lightnings flashed
Their dirks of fire;
The thunders rumbled—crashed!
A wild storm-choir.

“God, I am sore afraid
Before Thy skies;
Sheathe Thou Thy furious blade
Ere courage dies.”

Love spake in every form
Beneath the blue:
“My child, I made the storm
For love of you.”

I

The choral pines to the wild winds are singing,
A weird Aeolian strain,
Aloft their dark imperial branches swinging
In sunshine, dark and rain,
Through all the patient centuries outflinging
Their litanies of pain.

Stern atmospheres and lashing storms enfold them
And robes of ancient night;
The rock-sills of the solid planet hold them
And swing them to the light;
They whisper dreams—the dreams the mountains
told them,
The great peaks tipped with white.

Dreams of the story of their own creation—
How from a burning mist
Love forged a bulwark in each fiery station
Howe'er His wisdom wist,
And flaming billows on each rock-foundation
Broke wild and seethed and hissed!

Then all the sons of God smote on the lyre
Some strain of praise to try;
The morning stars, a great celestial choir,
Together sang on high,
And lurid peaks that split the winds of fire
Bulged sheerly up the sky.

The pines had heard the mountains tell the story;
Long ere our feet had trod
The hillsides in their wealth of summer glory
Or pressed the velvet sod
The waves were beating on the bastions hoary
The whisper-dreams of God.

Dreams of a time ere yet the years were numbered,
Before the mountains were,
Long ere an eagle's nest the crags had cumbered
With nested eaglet's care,
While every primal form of life yet slumbered
In sea and fire and air.

But burning mist was all, and all was motion
Within a spherèd dome,
The earth an eddy in a flaming ocean,
A spume of fire and foam,
A prophecy of Love's unplumbed devotion
When earth should be our home.

A whirling chaos, rapture-thrilled,
Love's tabernacle stood;
His chariot was the hurricane,
His highway was the flood.

His hand of power shook tempests forth
In whirlwinds fierce and warm;
The lightnings fled before His face,
His vesture was the storm.

One heart, one life, one urge sublime,
One all-creative Soul
Impassioned all the universe
And glorified the whole.

.

The storm was life-expression. Canst thou
wonder,
If thou know'st aught of Love,
With no repressive power to hold it under,
No stern restraint above,
That Love should wildly burn and rage and thunder,
And like a tempest move?

Love was the source of life from everlasting
To everlasting years;
When seas dashed hissing on the rocks and blasting
The solid granite piers,
'Twas life chaotic huge rock-masses casting
Into its own salt tears.

Here all was life ere life to forms was broken,
Here God Himself seemed young;
Eternal wisdom had not found a token,
Love had not yet a tongue;
The earth was still a word of life unspoken,
A song of love unsung.

Here thought and feeling, soaring and ascending,
 The summer sunshine warm,
The stately cedar on the hill-top bending,
 Each lovely flow'ret form,
With all the harmonies of time were blending
 In that primeval storm.

But Life, the elemental forms essaying,
 Climbed ever, ever higher
On roads of victory, anew displaying
 Some basic, fixed desire,
While each time-spirit on life's forms was laying
 Its tribulum of fire.

Within each part there brooded the great Spirit
 Awaiting that glad hour
When, bursting from its bonds, earth should inherit
 The glorious wisdom-flower,
And Love should lift the race to Christly merit,
 And pain awake to power.

Love blossomed by the brooks in valleys vernal,
 Smiled in the lily fair;
He hid within the acorn's tiny kernel,
 And lordly oaks were there;
In human flesh, and lo, the life eternal
 'Tis ours with Love to share!

In the stars that gem the blue
Of the night,
In the storm and in the dew,
There is light;
In the clouds that split with thunder,
In the soul athrill with wonder,
Over all, and through, and under,
There is Love and Light.

In the moon-gleam on the sea
There is power,
In the suns and nebulae,
In the flower;
In the soul of pure desire
Present always to inspire
Like a gleam of pillared fire,
There is Love and Power.

And thus the footfall of forgotten marches
Comes faintly down the breeze,
The rustling leaf-songs of the firs and larches
Blend their joy-minstrelsies,
And sing the runes of ancient forest arches,
The chansons of old seas.

With odours of the orient and the sighing
 Of sylvan lutes, the song
Of birds, the beat of angel pinions flying,
 The surges breaking strong
On moaning beaches, breezes ling'ring, dying
 Amid the fir-tree throng,

They tell how Love, in mighty tribulation
 Long ere our lives began,
Nailed Nature to the cross, a true oblation,
 In some divine, dim plan,
And raised again, in thrilling exaltation,
 This blue-arched home for man.

Such was the song that drifted down the ocean
 And stirred the ancient pine;
Such was the urge and promise of devotion
 To Love's supreme design
That moved in billows of intense emotion,
 Primordial, divine.

And all that lurid pageant of existence
 Was force unsubjugate,
A life potential dreaming of persistence,
 The dream that we call fate,
And whirling, reeling down ethereal distance
 In flaming robes and state!

II

In mount or vale, throughout the changeful year,
From all the by-ways of the world, I peer
Into the secret places where they wind
Almost beyond the utmost reach of mind,
And beauty, beauty everywhere I find.

“O why,” I asked, “doth Nature in such wealth
Lavish her jewels, hide them as by stealth,
The wondrous treasures of her artist soul
In opulence outpour, and o'er the whole
Great wilderness of worlds her splendours roll?”

From jungles only to the wild things known,
From waste karroo, from forest deep and lone,
From icy north, and from each starry flame
That looks into the ocean’s mirror-frame,
One clear and universal answer came:

“The Soul of All is beautiful, then why
Should Nature anywhere in earth or sky
Fall from her high estate? If it should be
One wild flamingo by an unknown sea
Found God unbeautiful, no God were He!”

Eternal Beauty will have all things under
His own majestic form;
He shapes their plastic souls to dreams of wonder
With sledges of the storm,
In fires of life, on anvils of the thunder
His Love the changeless norm.

So Life is making beautiful and tender
All spirits that aspire,
Conformed by faith and hope, however slender,
To Love's supreme desire;
He makes the children of the gleam a splendour
In His refining fire.

The mother of a great love-consummation
In some low manger lies;
Lo, all the prophets of illumination
Have heard her travail-cries.
Joy to the world when for its full salvation
A Christed nation dies!

The peaks of life have deep and dark foundations
And strong granitic sills
That feel the hammer-strokes and take formations
And fashion as Love wills,
That all the tribes may build their habitations
Upon His purple hills.

And ever when the breezes soft are singing
 Where pines the forest gird,
They tell the anguish that Love's soul is wringing,
 They speak the fateful word,
The story that the foaming seas are singing,
 The song the mountains heard.

They sing of Nature each new problem solving
 Since time on earth began,
They show the Power omnipotent resolving
 Love's wonderful life-plan,
They celebrate humanity evolving
 From moneron to man.

The starry cross stands on the hills of daring
 And calls to toilsome steeps;
Life beckons to the hero onward faring
 Whose way is in the deeps,
Who, looking to the goal and not despairing,
 The onward pathway keeps.

And ever down the rugged courses winding
 Where dangers fierce enfold,
The eye of faith the priceless pearl is finding
 In waters wild and cold;
The stones of fate the patient ores are grinding,
 For He must have pure gold.

The stalwart heart still dares the ocean surges
Beneath the winter stars;
The sword of conflict still injustice purges
Upon the shield of Mars,
And brave Discovery still its voyage urges
Beyond the western bars.

The morn shall break to love and life transcendent,
And bring us free and strong,
Where clad in robes of purity resplendent,
The souls of beauty throng,
And visioned hosts in joy and light attendant,
Uplift the voice in song:

O Love is a city whose gates of pearl
Swing wide to the vales of peace,
Where sun-rays fall on the ivory wall
In whispers of care-release;
A land where the viewless light reveals
No deed that the love-life mars,
But hearts are free as the heart can be,
And true as the faithful stars.

There all are glad for their souls are brave,
And free for their lives are true;
No storm-wind flies down the halcyon skies
To flutter the star-flamed dew;

But odours drift from the wildwood bowers
With dreams to the soul of Art,
And Beauty sings of immortal things
To those who are pure in heart.

O City of Love with the golden towers,
Thou land of the viewless light,
Thy gates are wide; none is love-denied
Though he dwell in the tents of night.
We open our souls to the great life-call
That whispers of care-release,
And flags unfurl o'er the gates of pearl
As we enter Love's Land of Peace.

• • •
Eternal Love begets the child of glory
In agony and tears;
O'er Marathon and Marne, though red and gory,
The morning star appears,
And echoes of the angel song and story
Drift down the patient years.

The hearts of men shall never more be fearing
The horror-trump of war,
For now the larger Christmas-dawn is nearing,
And wise men see afar
Above the low horizon-line appearing
The comrade-nations' star.

The Christ is born in larger soul-expression
And lives of vaster peace;
We find new love-lands of serene progression,
Nor shall we ever cease
From vision of new truth in sure succession
Of courage and release.

The holiest, happiest hour for man or nation
In all the storied past
Was when from some deep blight of obscurcation
The morn broke forth at last
And all the glory of each constellation
Hid in the opal vast.

So, through the world's long travail unaffrighted,
Hope taketh heart again;
Are not the lamps of faith oftentimes relighted
At some dim torch of pain?
There never was a human soul benighted
That suffered aught in vain.

The might that wastes, the will that hurls disaster,
Shall fall before the light,
Shall bow the heart to Love, the only Master,
And worship in His sight,
And life shall larger grow and vision vaster
By living in the height.

The sorrows of the ever-toiling lowly
Oppressed by greed and wrong,
Who build and beautify our temples holy,
And labour hard and long,
Have lifted man, though painfully and slowly,
To heights of strength and song.

The agonies and moanings of the ages,
The griefs the centuries hold,
The nameless cruelties on history's pages
Too tragic to be told,
Are birth-pangs of a race of lover-sages
Who bring the age of gold.

There shall be noble joys beyond the telling
When Love's benignant will
To music of kind deeds is rising, swelling,
And every heart's athrill
With gladness in each humble wayside dwelling
On every peaceful hill.

Though thunders roar in volleyed conflagration,
And storm the planet sweeps,
Love hath a warrant and a compensation
If but one mother keeps
Her faithful watch in loving consecration
While her dear baby sleeps.

Though hurricanes of hell sweep down the water
And beat upon our coasts,
Though myrmidons of flame and arms of slaughter
Breathe out their brutal boasts,
And babe and mother, sister, wife and daughter,
Assault with vandal hosts,

Though Love leads upwards, now through wildest
surges,
Anon through fiercest fire,
Each new successive renaissance emerges
From desolations dire;
What matters, hell or heaven, if Love but urges?
On, on to Love's desire!

The echoes of the heavenly voices calling,
Sonorous, sweet and clear,
Drift down the starless dark, no more appalling
Though once so rife with fear,
Till on our souls the peace of God is falling,
And we the angels hear.

The seraph-music hymns its joy-thrilled warning
Across the deep-arched dome;
The sages see Love's star the skies adorning
O'er continent and foam;
The child is born; this, this is God's great morning.
The golden age is come!

MYTH

IMMORTAL Beauty built her stately home
In laurel grove by leaf-embowered stream,
Cloud-pillared it in Art of Greece and Rome,
And robed in draperies of Olympic dream.

Here is no remnant of a slow decay,
No chronicle degenerate where abide
Dreams insubstantial of a twilight gray,
Or hoary superstition glorified;

Myth is the pulsing of great music, felt
Through the deep thunder of the storm and strife,
In which the jarring notes that will not melt
Are broken in the sacrament of life.

A nobleness the heart can not forget,
Inwoven into deeds and hopes and fears,
And raised aloft in starry silhouette
Along the dim face of forgotten years.

Here youthful eyes have opened drowsy lids
To view the ranks of that immortal throng,
The mighty souls that reared the Pyramids,
And thrilled the marching centuries with song.

Unscathed they stand, immutable, sublime,
Great-souled, beyond the barriers of gloom,
In solemn light, above the wrecks of time,
They rise triumphant, challenging the tomb.

DEAD GODS

LONG the Nile, the ancient psaltery sings
Osiris' name no more;
No timbrel bell in court of Zion rings,
Nor on the Kedron's shore.

The old theogonies of Greece are dying,
Olympus rears his head
Above the white reefs on the breezes flying,
But all his gods are dead.

The strong divinities of faithful Roman
Are in oblivion's tide,
And all the names and fames of classic omen
From human hearts have died;

Albeit, the soul, athirst for spirit union
With some great power above,
In every life is longing for communion
Of love with some great Love.

THE ADVENTURE

FROM weary days of hope and dread, and a constant yearning,
From tedious months of fitful mood and emotion turning,
From wonder and expectation till the man-child is leaping
Impulsive under the heart where new eras are sleeping,
Love turns to music of motherhood—an exquisite gladness
Of Spring and June-breath and song-bird's joy-madness,
Of life far deeper and vaster in vision and being and range,
In consciousness of creation, energy, ongo and change;
Then through the wild tempest of pain and labour and strife,
On, on, to the stern and tremendous adventure of life.

MY HAND IN THINE

MY hand in Thine, my heart thy guest;
Take me, O Love, to the young-eyed West.
Out on the morning, side by side,
Our lofty wings shall onward ride
O'er mountain peaks of rest.

Healer and Friend, o'er the heaving breast
Of a weary world, despoiled, oppressed,
Curing its ills, be Thou my guide,
My hand in Thine.

Ever some higher goal our quest,
Ever some later and nobler best,
Ever more glad, I would still abide
In Thy great sun-transepts, vast and wide,
My hand in Thine.

PRAYER

O THOU whose finger-tips,
From out the unveiled universe around,
Can touch my human lips
With harmonies beyond the range of sound;
Whose living word,
All vital truth revealing,
My soul hath stirred
To raptures holy, comforting and healing;
Beneath, around, above,
Breathe on me atmospheres
Of universal Love—
The music of the timeless years.
Upon my soul,
Pour vast eternities of might;
Up through my being roll
Deep seas of light
To urge me onward to the goal,
The Infinite, the Whole.

THE BANYAN

THE banyan builds upon the ground
Its lofty halls, its tents green-gowned;
Rears shaft and groin of noble plan,
Great massive architrave and span
With twining branches interwound.

Through all the sultry lands around,
One cool rest-covert is renowned,—
 The joy of every caravan,
 The banyan tree.

* * * *

In ancient Kalikhat, where Hoogli bears
The commerce of the Ind to Southern Seas,
The mother Earth suckles her banyan children
With life streams that rise and flow
To fill with stateliness a thousand lofty arches,
And roof with living green their myriad shades.

An undefined appeal is in that banyan grove.
Compounded of the sun and soil,
With roots to earth all turning,
Its leaf-lips sing dream-symphonies,
Like a sweet harp deep-ringing in the soul.
Its whispers blend like children's voices
Laughing low in eager happiness,
Yet is it filled with the serene immensities,
Life-lifted to the freedom of the stars.

O Temple-grove, thou seemest almost human!
Am I not too a thousand souls in one,
And thou my brother, friend, companion?
The soil of earth sustains us both,
The blight of hurricane, the blast of fire
Devastate both with death,
Yet here are both, despite the fire and flood,
In free, unconquered life, invincible.

O thou compassionate shelter in a weary land,
We too wave spirit arms to greet the sun
And yearn for the inviolable blue.
Our lives shall be a resting-place
And covert from the heat upon that road
Whereon souls press to a great peace
And drink from everlasting fountains.

Ourselves, unrecognized in others,
Become our enemies. We smite our foes,
Wounding our own hearts with words and thoughts
That cut like scimitars. Our eyes
Turn selfward, kindly and indulgent,
Away from self, keen and suspicious.
We see life but in shreds, and grasp at these,
Not knowing life is one.
Fear and unfaith divide us,
Blinding us to Love that longs to lift us all
To sun-sweep of all-oneness.

Great emblem of the cosmic powers,
Teach our blind hearts the vaster unities,
That we may gaze into that deep blue eye of love
That mortals name the sky,
And feel the heart-beat of the Universe.

WIND-HORSES

FROM vistas far-reaching of valley and highland,
The wild west-wind couriers form,
And send out the breezes o'er ocean and island
To herald the on-coming storm.

The wind-horses toss their foam-manes to the thunder
And charge with the lightning and hail;
Their squadrons of battle are beating things under
The feet of the trampling gale.

They urge their weird armies across the free sky-ways,
Cloud-veiling the earth's azure roofs;
They plough the round planet with furrows and high-
ways,
The scars of their hammering hoofs.

They gallop in plalanx, resistless in motion,
A phantom-winged army of ghosts;
They drive their white caravels over the ocean,
And beat them to spray on the coasts.

For stern readjustments the wind-horses battle,
And ever the strongest prevail;
The oaks on the mountains their iron arms rattle,
And laugh as they comb out the gale.

The earth is renewed by the flails of the winter,
 Reborn from the womb of the blast;
The hailstones that beat and the lightnings that
 splinter
Are angels of healing at last.

• • • • •
So all the immortals, the viewless wind-horses,
 Face hidden, feet hidden in flight,
Consuming, enlarging, ennobling the forces
 That bend to the infinite light,

Are wings of the silent ones gleaming with glory,
 Whose spirits fire-girded and strong,
Dream-souled and cloud-visaged, are sovereigns of
 story,
The sources of vision and song.

A permanent flame from the Heart of the Ages,
 A fire in a vesturing cloud,
Is flung o'er the sensitive souls of the sages
 Who cry in the desert aloud.

Oh clear is their song in its sternness and beauty,
 In echoing laughter and tears;
In deeds of heroic adventure and duty,
 It rings down the palpitant years.

ONE STEP

HAST thou the wisdom one least step to take?
Take thou that step even though the heavens
fall,
Thankful that thou hast faith and power to make
One onward move—to take a step at all.

THE FACE OF GOD

THE face of God is in the skies,
And whosoe'er beholdest dies."
So spake the priest, the sombre-gowned
And blind of heart, tradition-bound,
Not knowing that his 'truth' was lies.

Inspired of Love, the heavenly-wise,
I looked into a child's blue eyes,
And there beholding Love, I found
The face of God!

Where valleys sweep, or mountains rise,
Where flow'ret blooms or sorrow sighs,
On blue, wide sea or swarded ground,
Love findeth ever, all around,
The face of God!

MAKING WAR

THE root of strife is not that final force
That bends the bow to breaking;
Give but one unkind thought free course
And war is in the making.

THE MAILED FIST

WHEN the blood of our deathless heroes
Has filtered away in the sand,
And the kindly earth to her aching breast
Has folded them all in passionless rest
And there's weeping in every land,
Shall a wild fool-world, blindly reeling,
Go blundering on through the mist,
And staggering down the roads of time
O'erwhelming the music of heaven sublime
With the threat of a mailed fist?

When mothers, war-widowed, are wailing,
With a deep despair in their tears,
Shall we see the thing we have fondly nursed,
Ambition, the dragon-monster accursed,
Still shaking his brand down the years?
Let war-drums be silenced forever,
The bannered millions dismissed,
And all the lands of the earth unite
To drive from the world with invincible light
The threat of the mailed fist!

BELGIUM

BELGIUM, thy name great glory hath;
When Might to baseness stooped, thy wrath
Withstood him in the battle-path.

The towers that might have been thy trust
They burned and razed and beat to dust—
Still wast thou valiant and august.

We treasure all thy deathless tears;
No quenching through the endless years
Thy silent, solemn grandeur fears.

On every sea, on every strand,
Thy name for faithfulness shall stand,
Belgium, the brave, immortal land!

The everlasting years shall ring,
While sun shall shine or heart shall sing,
With fame of Albert, Belgium's king.

MOTHER OF NATIONS WHY

DOES the Mother of Nations draw the sword
To rescue her children oppressed?
They have all that the richest lands afford;
They sit content at an ample board
As safe as a bird in its nest.

Has she laid her spear on the shield of Mars
New lands in the wars to gain?
Her dominions extend wherever the stars
Are blushing with shame for our foolish wars;
Her ships are on every main.

And not that the world may acclaim her grand
Is the roar of her guns on the seas;
Her name is lusted on every strand,
Her glory is known to the farthest land
Where her standard floats on the breeze.

Ah, this is the pillar of cloud and fire
That leads her hosts along;
This, this is the goal of their deep desire,
The road where their feet shall never tire,—
To be just, keep faith and be strong.

So the Mother of Nations has risen in might
At the word of the onward call;
She has shaken her banners forth to the light,
And marched to the front of the people's fight
Like the van of a tidal wall.

And the future shall say of her sons who died,
Wherever their feet have trod
With millions of comrades in arms allied:
"They cast the treasures of earth aside
And marched to the goals of God."

FREEDOM

Written, Lusitania day, 1915

A THOUSAND million eager marching feet
Go thundering onward to the lethean shore
While upward through the human birth-gates beat
A thousand million more.

Ye who take up the instrument of life,
Think not your heritage of joy was won
Without the waging of eternal strife
Beneath the wistful sun.

Your fathers challenged life with faith so vast
Achievement stands their monumental creed;
They sought no vindication from the past
Save in immortal deed.

O sacred Freedom, in life's holy war,
We pay thy cost however great it be,
Though ruined cities all the earth should scar
And ships go down at sea.

Then dare the billow and the fourfold blast,
Let each last reef and pennant be unfurled;
What though great Freedom cost us at the last
The wrecking of a world?

THE BUGLE

THE Empire needs, in this dark day of slaughter,
Great-hearted men, unawed by doom or dread;
What valor have you shown, what service brought her
To match the tribute of her glorious dead?

You who the loyal standard boldly flaunted
While peace around you guarded like a wall,
What do you now when Freedom is blood-haunted,
Do braggart words but make your deeds seem small?

When in the future days they tell the story
Of how the brave, the hero-hearted died,
When Liberty is crowned with fadeless glory,
Will you be standing honoured at her side

Because you ventured all nor sought a reason,
Why other men should die and you go free,
Because you held not back in coward treason
While comrades fought your fight on land and sea?

Amid the gallant ranks that did not waver
Before that blight that shook old Britain's shore,
Will you be one whose prowess helped to save her,
Who went to war that war should be no more?

The troopship in the harbor rideth ready,
The tumult thickens. Hear the scornful word.
The foe is mocking! Lift the anchor—steady.
High tide. The ship's away! Are you aboard?

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

THY peace, O God, our hearts implore!
No armistice red-shot with gore;
No fist of steel with threat fear-clad,
But peace that earth has never had,
With Love sun-gilding every shore.

We spurn all peace that dares ignore
Thy justice. Down the battle-roar,
The cry rings clear, though stern and sad;
Thy peace, O God!

We crave no peace that has a score
Of tyrannies deep at its core;
No wealth and squalor, money-mad,
But peace that makes the whole world glad,—
Thy peace, O God.

DAWN

THOUGH thunders deep the hearts of men are
shaking

And war-wolves raven red-eyed, fierce and wild;
Though overhead a storm of blood is breaking
Where once the peace-star smiled;

Brightly the sunrise of Love's dawn is turning
On this dim earth a light before unknown;
A flame of freedom in the soul is burning
And God is on His throne.

Unfurl the emblems of a life unbounded;
Fling ample banners to the upper blue;
Soar to the heights and plumb the deeps unsounded,
Bring nobler paths to view.

The birth of new dominions is impending;
A new world leaps beneath the old world's heart;
And faith beholds blue skies of freedom bending—
Up, People! Do your part.

Lift every voice for world-emancipation;
Give Wisdom, Love and Service fullest power;
Rouse, rouse, ye people to the consummation
Of this your dawning hour!

AFTER

AFTER the storm—a calm
That startles the blue to surprise,
And lustres the path
Where earth lies
All spent with the hurricane's wrath.

After the day of toil—
The hush of the cool summer eve,
The purple-dyed west,
And the weave
Of beautiful things sun-caressed.

After the dark, the morn
Dims softly each radiant star,
Till the blush of its ray
Hides afar
In the heart of the conquering day.

After the fight is o'er,
And the tumult of conflict is past,
From a whirlwind of dust
Shall a vast
Morn break to an infinite trust.

And the war shall be nothing at last
But a glistening tear, love-impearled,
By sorrow and sacrifice left
On the sunlit face of the world.

LORD OF THE LANDS

Lord of the lands, beneath Thy bending skies,
On field and flood, where'er our banner flies,
Thy people lift their hearts to Thee,
Their grateful voices raise:
May our Dominion ever be
A temple to Thy praise.
Thy will alone let all enthrone;
Lord of the lands, make Canada Thine own!

Almighty Love, by Thy mysterious power,
In wisdom guide, with faith and freedom dower;
Be ours a nation evermore
That no oppression blights,
Where justice rules from shore to shore,
From Lakes to Northern Lights.
May Love alone for wrong atone;
Lord of the lands, make Canada Thine own!

Lord of the worlds, with strong eternal hand,
Hold us in honour, truth, and self-command;
The loyal heart, the constant mind,
The courage to be true,
Our wide-extending empire bind,
And all the earth renew.
Thy name be known through every zone;
Lord of the worlds, make all the lands Thine own!

SAPPHO

Sappho:

THE darkness thins to dawn
And earth, expectant,
Waits the unrisen sun.
Even now, his smile is on Olympus.
Phoebus kisses first the gods,
Then stoops to lips of men.

Where emerald Scyros gems the wave
The ruddy splendours of the dawn
Dissolve to opal; voices of the sea
Speak low farewells to night,
And breezes play among
The cypresses and sycamores.

The northern path we take,
Between the oleanders and the sea,
For there the way is dewless
And from thence are seen afar
The ramparts of old Ilium.

Read to me now, Erinna Dear,
Thy latest lay

(Erinna reads.)

Sappho:

Dear daughter of the sacred nine,
Thou singest tender cadences

Like zephyrs out of Eden.
Anon, the thought leaps from thy page
Upon my soul with such a passion
I could almost weep.
Thy vision far outstrips
The bards of Israel.
Such stateliness and majesty
Befits the toils of Herakles,
The deeds of Diomed.
Sonorous tumults rouse the sense
As when the hurricane
Roars down the skies
And shakes the ocean to white foam
Around those crags
Where Pelion and Ossa rise
In monumental calm.

Such is thine art,
But would I show the charm of thee,
Then must I paint a lovely dream
Of veilèd beauty through deep
Backgrounds stealing;
Must breathe the fragrance of the air
At the day's crimson dawn;
Must bend across the misty skies
A rainbow of bright prophecy,
And bury sorrow in a lotus grave.

Thy day of life shall glorious be;
I see the rays of an imperishable dawn;
I hear an ultra-tonal harmony
That moves me like the voice
Of singing waters,—
A massive undertone,
The sum of all those immortalities
That swell the great antiphonal of life.

A mist o'erspreads the ocean
With ghostly shroud
Like some weird shadow of myself,
A spectre of my happier years
That in the vastness of the gloom
Is my companion.

Fame lures my soul no more;
In thy young love more happy I
Than all the gods of Elis.
Let others choose the world
And all its torturing vanities;
Let me forever sing.

But now, farewell awhile
To Homer's land,
Enrobed by years and dreams
And soothed by crooning Time;

The sun rides up the sea
And Lesbos keeps a holiday.
The Tyrant wills thy presence at the games,
And jealously connives my absence
For his pride is surfeited
By Alcaeus' flattery.
But thou shalt see me there!
Our smiles shall kiss across the light
When Sappho's name
From Mytelene's throat shall ring
And beat a myriad music on the air
Stabbing the envious heart of Pittacus
With rage, but gladdening thine
Whose love is constant as the sun
That flames the bosom of the sea.
Not boastingly I dare his frown,
But for my deep, undying love of thee.

Hark how the herald birds
Blow tiny trumpets to announce the day!

LA SALLE

To Henri de Tonti

HEAR that whining cry!
A porcupine fretting the wilderness,
That sea of subtle sounds and silences,
The lisping leaves, the grace-notes of the rain,
The choral birds, the cry of timid things
When lightning's sudden rapier stabs the dark.
How solemn is the fluting of the winds
Whose clarion voice the thunder's monotone
Preludes, before the great crescendo bursts
To one wild blare of trumpet, cymbal, drum,—
The lesser throats of song all mute amid
The crash of that tremendous orchestra.

The virgin heart of this old wilderness
Is fickle as an April morn, now calm
As tropic night; anon, tossed and distraught
By all the wild artillery of the storm.

How voluble, in crowds, the speech of man,
But in the mighty woods, how pitiful!
And yet, I would my lips were eloquent
As hermit Peter's when he moved the kings
To match his ardour with their chivalry.
Then would we shake a riper, rosier fruit

Into the lap of faith, flame all the days
With beacons of immortal deed, and move
Across the astonished years with such a stride
As would transmute this trackless continent.

'Tis as thou sayest, Tonti: had we here,
For reinforcement of our enterprise,
What France now fondly wastes on parasites
And breeders of decay, then would our souls
Great tasks essay beyond a hero's dream;
But now, since I must pay this debt of France,
I halt the affairs of half a hemisphere,
Hold back this starry opportunity,
And with my guides traverse a thousand leagues
Of stream and wild, to trade in fetid pelts
Before our eager feet shall win to walk
In high illustrious roads.

Duplicity

Slime-tracks our ways, shadows our purposes.
Thee only and the Gouverneur, I dare to trust.
True, thou art not of France; but hearts like thine
Are priceless whatsoever state they serve.
Tonti and Frontenac—two men all true—
Are quite enough to fill my ample cup
Of friendship to the brim and overflow.
Ah, how I wish we had even now, though late,
For all these skulking traitors, honest men,
Who, lacking vision, would give heed to mine.

Then would we set this North America
A blazing jewel in the crown of France,
And give these bronzed children of the wild
A better faith.

The lordly Iroquois,
The docile Illinois and stately Sioux,
Must find me strong and reticent and stern;
Therefore my words must fateful be and grave
As most befits the herald of the king.
'Twas never mine to rule in courtly way
Or bend my course to any urge of fear.
How could I be thy friend and be afraid?
Why should we ever stoop to weak defense,
Or bow the august stature of our souls
To levels lower than the ancient stars?
None could reveal to lesser souls than thine,
The dream of a transfigured continent.

Ah, Friend, even my slow lips grow eloquent
Beneath thy constant and inspiring faith.
Such happy lure bids words like rivers flow.
How great we are in presence of a friend!
Would France achieve high projects, she must feel
The urgent impulse of that mighty dream
That storms across our hearts and rise in deed
To its accomplishment. The lion's cubs,

At large, even now, in French America,
Push all their strength against our fortresses
And from the field and farm, beloved of God,
Would drift to the devices of the mart.

On this starved rock we'll build impregnable
A fort with face of fire. This thou shalt hold
While I adventure forth to Canada,
And thence to mine own land across the seas,
To France belovèd, France the beautiful,
For convoys from the king. These will he give
When I persuade him, as I will, that here,
Where uplands pour their tributary streams
Into the universal flood; here where
Untracked, interminable forests lie,
And wide savannahs, thou and I will found
Dominions vaster than the Caesars knew
Or Alexander dreamed.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

O 'ER tropic night's dark velvet dome
A crystal star swings upward from the deep
And gleams across the waters. So he came.
No thunders shook the world; the vaulted blue
Was arched serenely to the bluer sea.
The banners of the flaming dawn were flung
O'er Nevis and afar, when lo! love-born,
And loftily conceived in mind and heart,
This child of destiny first saw the light.

His mother knew the thrill of wondrous love;
That ecstasy beyond all thought or speech
Or dream that brings into the field of life
By matchless miracle of parenthood
The fire and flame of high eternal youth
In beacon minds that keep the ages bright,
Then join the hosts of the immortal dead.

Into that swirling gulf, the red-hot heart
Of time's most central revolution, hurled
By hurricane and fire, his soul was fed
On tempests while his child-like heart beguiled
World-music from the surges, in the foam
Found exaltation, conquering the storm
With weapons of the light.

The days were dark
And perilous the paths. The early blasts
That beat upon his chieftain's honoured head
Were tempered by his labours and his love.
Soon as the winds that swept across the sea
Had passed, and while the foaming steeds of state,
Panting awhile for breath, but rested now,
Were champing on their bits, and eager stood
Impatient of the rein, ambitious each
To lead the cavalcade, he forged those bonds
That to the central purpose held them all
In federal unity, devising laws
That held the nation firm amid the flood.

He sought and found highroads of wealth and peace
And set the people in the prosperous ways
Of enterprise. From all entanglements
With foreign states held her hot blood aloof,
And won their trust with honour.

Now shall stand,
To speak his worth, one fitting monument,
That mighty modern state his vision planned.
But who shall tell the kindness of his heart,
The gentleness and goodness, all those charms
That made his presence such a joyous thing
To those who felt its sway.

America,

The ages wait! Amid their starry spheres,
The patient eyes of immortality,
Hope-lured, look wistful on, while self-regard
Bends justice to the subtle curves of greed
And warps the law.

Shades of the mighty dead!

Some flaming word of love and wrath resound
To call the souls of men to sacrifice.
So shall that splendid dream that flamed your
hearts—

A federal union of these several states
With central oversight in large affairs—
Become the hope of nations and their plan
For sane and just dominion of a world
Too small for independent governments,
Too vast for rule by persons.

THE HOMELIGHT

AH, there is one light
Brighter than sunlight;
Fairer and clearer
 Its beautiful ray;
Restful as twilight,
Far-twinkling high light
 Lovelier, nearer,
 And dearer than they.

Hearthlight and homelight,
After the foam white,
 After the tossing
 O'er life's storm-swept way;
Here is the one light
Brighter than sunlight,
 Lovelier, clearer,
 And dearer than day.

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